

The Board of Finance held a special meeting on **March 26, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.** in the **Meeting Room of Windham Town Hall, 979 Main Street, Willimantic, CT 06226**

Members Attending: Lynne Ide, Anita Sebestyen, Kenneth Folan, and Tyler Griffin, Nectalis Martines, Thomas White

1. Call to Order

Chairman Lynne Ide called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Public Comment

There was no comment.

3. Board of Finance Comment

There was no comment.

4. Presentation and Special Reports

Presentation from Town Manager on the Town Council's proposed 2014-2015 budget.

Paul Hongo, Drusilla Carter, Michael Licata, Matt Vertefeuille, Peter Zvingas are present to answer questions.

An overview of the Willimantic Service District, and General Government was discussed. The debt service was discussed and part of the increase was due to the "hot potato" from the Board of Education. With the refinancing that was done and the bond rating that just came out there will be some savings in the debt service lines.

The pension lines were increased in both the Town and Willimantic Service District.

The health insurance fund has done well. The funding is flat in the proposed budget.

Departments have been very good at staying within their budget.

The revaluation was done effective October 1, 2013 and that will affect the tax bills for this coming July. Most of the property values went down so the mill rate will increase just based on the Grand List amount. Some scenarios were presented as to how the taxes will be increased or decreased. Some property taxes will go down because the percentage of decrease was more than the increase in the mill rate. Most residential properties went down an average of 10%. The commercial and industrial properties stayed the same or had a slight increase.

Personnel changes include an economic development director, part-time bi-lingual aide in the Town Clerk's office, 2 part-time parking monitors, part-time security guard, part-time admin security and additional hours for activities coordinator in the Senior Center.

The development services plan is to have all departments in one location. The building official, fire marshal, town planner, town engineer, code compliance director, health inspector, and economic development director.

The parking garage is a project that is on the list to get done and is about 80% in the design phase.

The 2 parking monitors will be working out of public works and it is expected they will generate enough income to support their wages. Another suggestion that has been made is to purchase parking meters. The bi-lingual aide is for the Town Clerk's office and this person will work in both the Town Manager's and Town Clerk's office.

Tom White commented on the full time building inspector. The Town Council approved the position going to full time but they cannot approve the funding for the position. That request needs to come before the Board of Finance.

The capital budget was reviewed. One item is to convert the auditorium to the new meeting room with cable tv set up, new cameras, new microphones, and a new sound board.

The Willimantic Service District has 2 police squad cars and a SUV, and a service truck and SUV for the fire department in the capital improvement plan.

The Town has LoCIP projects that will include a new sewer line for Town Hall, remove 2 fuel tanks, security cameras at town hall, renovate a bathroom at public works, a new generator to power gas pumps at public works, memorial park safety lighting. The light poles from Garden on the Bridge will be used at memorial park and new poles that will hold 2 lights will be put up at Garden on the Bridge.

Ongoing projects include the senior center, Roads and Sidewalks, Regional Trail Connection, MUNIS financial software, and consolidate Finance offices.

Future items to look at – Insurance coverage's and deductibles.

5. Discussion and possible action on the General Government proposed 2014-2015 budget.

The Board of Education will come back to answer any Board of Finance questions on April 2, 2014.

Matt Vertefeulle commented on his budget and the revenues have increased and his overall budget has decreased. He believes having all departments in one location is good.

Peter Zvingelis, Building Official, commented on his budget. The demolition and security increased. If there is a public safety issue, the costs will have to come from somewhere. He has also requested a vehicle to be dedicated to the department. The vehicle is not included in the budget and could be added to the capital plan.

James Finger, Town Planner, commented on the economic development budget and the increase in that budget was due to the proposed Economic Development Director.

Michael Licata, Fire Marshal, commented on the budget and there has been a slight increase. The inspection program is improving.

Druisilla Carter, Library Director, commented on her budget. Part of the increase is in the outside contractors line for a one time cleaning of the library and a security guard. The budget has not increased other than the outside contractors. She thanked the board for the appropriation to hire a security guard now.

Paul Hongo, Personnel Director and also oversees Animal Control. The personnel budget for Animal Control is for 3 part-time officers at 25 hours each. The \$400 is for a back door and Dog Pound Facility needs some work.

Neida Rosado discussed town council, municipal administration, Legal, and Town Hall budgets. Professional Affiliations in the municipal administration budget covers all departments. The Legal Counsel budget decreased, and Town Hall increases were from heating fuel and electricity.

6. Discussion and possible action on the Willimantic Service District 2014-2015 budget

There was no discussion or action on the Willimantic Service District.

7. Public Comment

James Flores commented on the budget and people are outraged. He also commented on the number of employees of the Town and in the school system, and on the staffing in the finance departments of the Town and Board of Education. He asked the Board to leave the budget as they are and let the community decide.

Benie Dauteuil commented on the parking control employees and they should start before next fiscal year. The police department could get aggressive on the drug problems in the community.

8. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Thomas White, seconded by Anita Sebestyen the meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Attest: _____
Thomas Pesce